

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3328

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, NL
SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR MEETS WITH VAN DER LOUW

1. I HAD A FIRST-TIME MEETING OVER LUNCH WITH ROTTERDAM MAYOR ANDRE VAN DER LOUW AT HOME OF CONGEN SULSER. VAN DER LOUW, WHO HAS BEEN MAYOR SINCE 1974, IS A FORMER LABOR PARTY CHAIRMAN AND CURRENTLY AMONG THE RUMORED POSSIBLE SUCCESSORS TO DEN UYL.

2. HE SPOKE FAVORABLY OF HIS MONTH (JULY) IN US UNDER INTERNATIONAL VISITOR PROGRAM BUT SUGGESTED THAT SOME APPOINTMENTS, PARTICULARLY WITH POLITICIANS AND OFFICE-HOLDERS, BE MADE BEFORE VISITOR'S ARRIVAL ON THE BASIS OF REQUESTS SUBMITTED THROUGH EMBASSY. (COMMENT: THIS SOUNDS LIKE A GENTLE COMPLAINT, BUT I AM NOT CLEAR ON WHAT IT IS BASED.)

3. LIKE DEN UYL (THE HAGUE 4851), HE THINKS THE VAN AGT GOVERNMENT WILL LAST AT LEAST SEVERAL YEARS. BOTH VAN AGT AND HIS DEPUTY PREMIER WEIGEL "ARE THE KIND OF POLITICIANS WHO WON'T MAKE MANY WAVES." BESIDES, HE ADDED, THE LABOR PARTY MUST FIND NEW PROGRAMS; UNTIL IT DOES, OPPOSITION TO THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT IS "DIFFICULT." HE DID NOT THINK THE VAN AGT GOVT WOULD "GO BACKWARDS" ON SOCIAL PROGRAMS.

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THIS PARTLY BECAUSE THE PRIME MINISTER IS AWARE THAT THERE IS MORE SENTIMENT AND SUPPORT IN THE COUNTRY FOR THE LABOR PARTY THAN ANY OF THE OTHERS. THERE IS NO TAXPAYERS REVOLT HERE, HE SAID, ALTHOUGH THERE IS SUBSTANTIAL RESENTMENT ON THE PART OF PEOPLE WHO WORK TOWARD THE LARGE NUMBER OF PEOPLE WHO DO NOT WORK. HE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THIS COUNTRY MAY BE AT THE LIMIT OF WHAT IT CAN SPEND FOR SOCIAL PROGRAMS (57

PERCENT OF GNP). HE ALSO SPOKE OF THE NEED FOR AN INCOMES POLICY, ADDING HALF APOLOGETICALLY THAT WHILE HIS POLITICS AND "HEART" SHOULD PUT HIM ON THE SIDE OF A TRADE UNION- CONTROLLED INCOMES POLICY, HE NEVERTHELESS BELIEVES THAT SUCH A POLICY SHOULD BE CONTROLLED BY THE GOVERNMENT.

4. WITHIN THE NEXT MONTH, HE WILL BE ON TWO TRADE MISSIONS: THE FIRST TO BUDAPEST WHICH HE POINTED OUT WILL BE HALF-WAY BETWEEN THE NORTH AND BLACK SEAS WATERWAY WHICH IS IN THE WORKS. THEN HE IS GOING TO JAPAN.

5. IN NOVEMBER, HE WOULD LIKE TO ARRANGE FOR ME TO MEET WITH HIS CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS AND TO SEE VARIOUS URBAN AND COMMERCIAL PROGRAMS IN ROTTERDAM. I TOLD HIM I WOULD BE DELIGHTED.

JOSEPH

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